

Yala Peak: Where I Learned Ice Axes are Heavy and Regret is Free

By Michal



Let's start with a confession: when my guide Sanjay called [Yala Peak](#) "a friendly starter climb," I should've known it was Himalayan code for "you'll weep into your thermos at 5,000 meters."

My partner-in-suffering? Sanjay—a man whose calves defy physics and who smiles while ascending vertical ice. Our mission: summit Nepal's 5,500m "gentle giant" in Langtang Valley. Spoiler: gentle is a lie.

Phase 1: Denial (and the Bus Ride from Kathmandu That Shook My Soul)

The "adventure" began with a 7-hour bus ride to Syabrubesi on a road that felt like a washing machine full of rocks. Sanjay meditated peacefully. I practiced breathing exercises to avoid vomiting into my neighbor's lap.

The first days through Langtang Valley were all sunshine and delusion: rhododendron forests, suspiciously cheerful yaks, and teahouses serving momos (dumplings that taste like heaven at 2,500m). "This trekking thing is easy," I bragged, as Sanjay grinned and pointed to a distant pointy peak. "That's Yala. We sleep there tomorrow."

The peak looked like a frozen shark fin.

Phase 2: Bargaining (With Altitude and a Goat Named Steve)

At Kyanjin Gumpa (3,800m), reality arrived like a slap:

- The air thinned.
- My water bottle froze overnight.
- A goat named Steve blocked the trail, chewing my map while staring into my soul.

Sanjay: "He likes you!"

Steve: *Spits out map*

Me: "I feel judged."

Training day was a blur of:

- Crampon practice (walking like a duck on steroids).
- Ice axe lessons (Sanjay: "Swing like you mean it!" Me: *gently taps ice*).
- Sanjay eating my chocolate stash "for energy."



Phase 3: Terror (The Night My Toes Went Rogue)

Summit day started at 2 AM. Temps: -10°C. My headlamp beam shook like a disco ball. For hours, we crawled up the glacier, roped together like doomed astronauts. Every creak of the ice sounded like the mountain clearing its throat.

Sanjay: "Don't look down!"

Me: *Looks down. Sees abyss.*

My lungs: *Formal resignation letter*

Then dawn cracked open the sky. Pink light hit the summit, and suddenly—BAM—we were on top. Tibet's Shishapangma glowed in the distance, prayer flags snapped in the wind, and Steve the goat was (probably) judging us from afar. I may have hugged Sanjay. (He smelled like yak cheese and victory.)

Phase 4: Bliss (and the Descent of Shame)

Going down was a circus act:

- Me: crab-walking backward like a startled spider.
- Sanjay: gracefully gliding while humming "Hakuna Matata."
- My knees: audibly plotting revenge.

Back in Kyanjin Gompa, a teahouse grandma force-fed us dal bhat and milk tea. As I inhaled my fourth plate, Sanjay whispered: "Island Peak next?" I threw a momo at his forehead.

The Takeaway: Frostbite and Life Lessons

Yala Peak taught me:

1. "Beginner-friendly" means "you'll cry, but prettily."
2. Goats are the Himalayas' truest philosophers (Steve's stare haunts me).
3. Sanjay deserves sainthood (or at least my leftover Snickers).
4. Summit views erase all suffering... until the descent.

Would I do it again? Ask me when my toes regain feeling. But staring across the Tibetan Plateau while sipping thermos tea? That sticks to your soul like dal bhat to a hungry trekker

Pro tip: if you want to go trek in Nepal don't miss to go [Nepal mountain adventure](#). This is the best trekking company in Nepal, the accommodation is best, and the facilities are good. I was going with the other company before, but the trek accommodation and facilities are not good as much I think but when I go with Nepal Mountain Adventure my imagination got match